

Portrait by Sir Godfrey Kneller

ISAAC WATTS, D.D.

THE
WORLD TO COME



ISAAC WATTS, D.D.

THE
WORLD TO COME;

OR,
DISCOURSES

JOYS OR SORROWS OF DEPARTED SOULS AT DEATH,

GLORY OR TERROR

THE RESURRECTION.

BY I. WATTS, D. D.

A NEW EDITION.

EMBELLISHED WITH A FINE PORTRAIT OF THE AUTHOR.

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PREFACE.

AMONG all the solemn and important things which relate to religion, there is nothing that strikes the soul of man with so much awe and solemnity as the scenes of death, and the dreadful or delightful consequences which attend it. Who can think of entering into that unknown region where spirits dwell, without the strongest impressions upon the mind, arising from so strange a manner of existence? Who can take a survey of the resurrection of the millions of the dead, and of the tribunal of Christ whence men and angels must receive their doom, without the most painful solicitude, "What will my sentence be?" Who can meditate on the intense and unmingled pleasure or pain in the world to come, without the most pathetic emotions of soul, since each of us must be determined to one of these states, and they are both of everlasting duration?

These are the things that touch the springs of every passion in the most sensible manner, and raise our hopes and our fears to their supreme exercise. These are the subjects with which our blessed Saviour and his apostles frequently entertained their hearers, in order to persuade them to hearken and attend to the divine lessons which they published among them. These were some of the sharpest weapons of their holy warfare, which entered into the inmost vitals of mankind, and

pierced their consciences with the highest solicitude. These have been the happy means to awaken thousands of sinners to flee from the wrath to come, and to allure and hasten them to enter into that glorious refuge that is set before them in the gospel.

My design therefore has been to set the great and most momentous things of a future world in the most convincing and affecting light, and to enforce them upon the conscience with all the fervour that such subjects demand and require. And may our blessed Redeemer, who reigns Lord of the invisible world, pronounce these words with a divine power to the heart of every man who shall either read or hear them.

The last discourses of this volume, especially the eternity of the punishments of hell, have been in latter and former years made a matter of dispute; and were I to pursue my inquiries into this doctrine, only by the aids of the light of nature and reason, I fear my natural tenderness might warp me aside from the rules and the demands of strict justice, and the wise and holy government of the great God.

But as I confine myself almost entirely to the revelation of scripture in all my searches

up and down in his word. (2) By the veracity of God in his intimations or narratives of past events, as Jude 7. Sodom and Gomorrha suffering the vengeance of eternal fire. (3) By his express predictions, Matt. xxv. 46. "These shall go away into everlasting punishment." 2 Thess. i. 9. "Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction ;" and I might add, (4) By the veracity and truth of all his holy prophets and apostles, and his Son Jesus Christ at the head of them, whom he has sent to acquaint mankind with the rules of their duty, and the certain judgment of God in a holy correspondence therewith, and that in such words as seem to admit of no way of escape, or of hope for the condemned criminals.

I must confess here, if it were possible for the great and blessed God any other way to vindicate his own eternal and unchangeable hatred of sin, the inflexible justice of his government, the wisdom of his severe threatenings and the veracity of his predictions, if it were also possible for him, without this terrible execution, to vindicate the veracity, sincerity and wisdom of the prophets and apostles, and Jesus Christ his Son, the

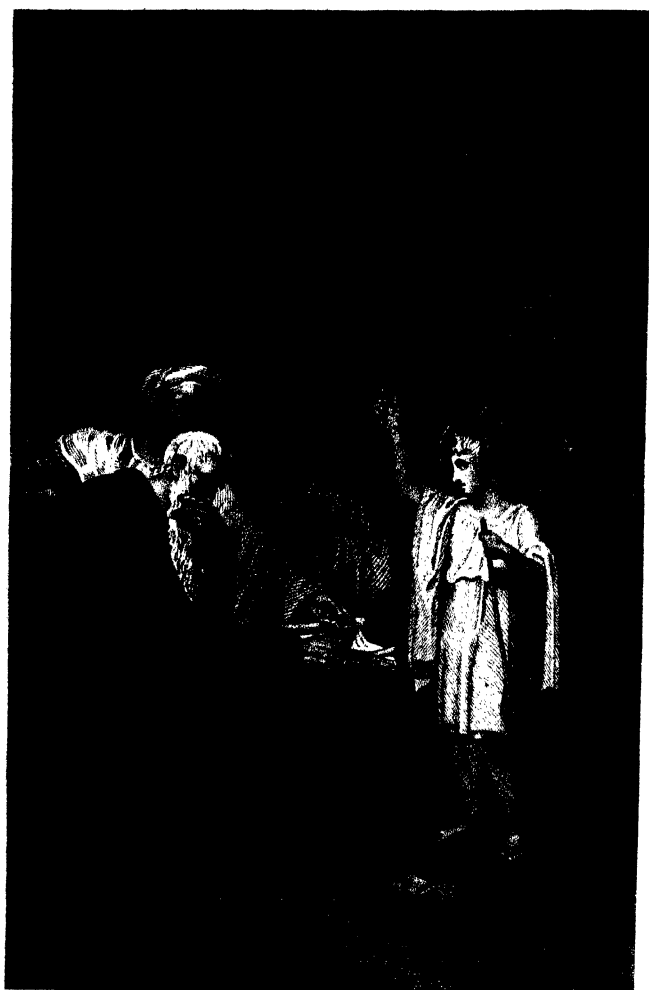
according to the discoveries of the New Testament, which must be my constant rule of faith, and hope, and expectation, with regard to myself and others. I have read the strongest and best writers on the other side, yet after all my studies I have not been able to find any way how these difficulties may be removed, and how the divine perfections and the conduct of God in his word, may be fairly vindicated without the establishment of this doctrine, as awful and formidable as it is.

The ways indeed of the great God and his thoughts are above our thoughts and our ways, as the heavens are above the earth; yet I must rest and acquiesce where our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father's chief minister both of his wrath and his love, has left me in the divine revelations of scripture; and I am constrained therefore to leave these unhappy creatures under the chains of everlasting darkness, into which they have cast themselves by their wilful iniquities, till the blessed God shall see fit to release them.

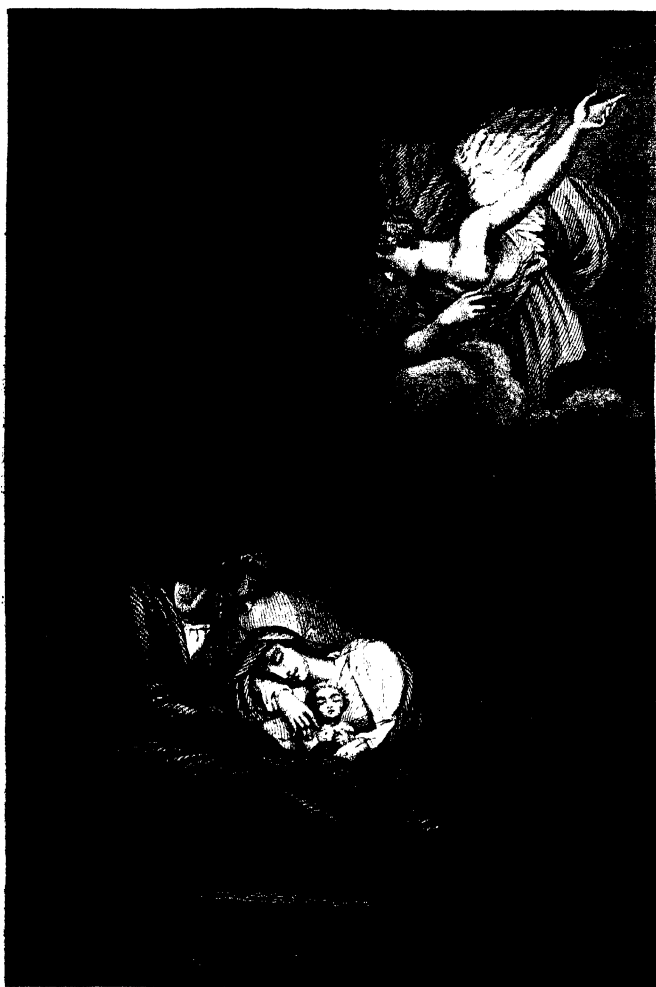
This would be indeed such a new, such an astonishing and universal jubilee both for













Engraved by J. Rogers

THE HOLY FAMILY.

ON THE
WORLD TO COME.

DISCOURSE I.

.....
THE END OF TIME.

REV. X. 5, 6.

And the angel, which I saw stand upon the sea, and upon the earth, lifted up his hand to heaven, and sware by him that liveth for ever and ever,— That there should be time no longer.

..... is the oath, and the solemn sentence of a — mighty angel, who came down from heaven, and by the description of him in the first verse, he seems to be the angel of God's presence, in whom is the name of God, even our Lord Jesus Christ himself, who pronounced and sware, that time should be no longer; for all seasons and times are now put into his hand, together with the book of his Father's decrees; Rev. v. 7, 9. What special age or period of time, in this world, the prophecy refers

beseech you in his name, continue not one day or one hour longer in your enmity and rebellion, but be ye reconciled to God your Creator, and accept of his offered forgiveness and grace, verse 20.

The moment is hastening upon us, when this mighty angel, who manages the affairs of the kingdom of providence, shall swear concerning every unbelieving and impenitent sinner, that the time of offered mercy shall be no longer, the time of pardon and grace and reconciliation shall be no more: the sound of this mercy reaches not to the regions of the dead; those who die before they are reconciled, they die under the load of all their sins and must perish for ever, without the least hope or glimpse of reconciling or forgiving grace.

3. At the term of this mortal life, the time of prayer and repentance and service for God or man in this world shall be no longer. Eccl. ix. 10 "There is no work nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave whither thou goest," whither we are all hastening. Let every sinful creature

pointing to the north or to the south, to hell or heaven ; Eccles. xi. 3.

And, indeed, where there is no true prayer, no sincere repentance can be exercised after this life ; for the soul that has wasted away all its time given for repentance and prayer, is at the moment of death left under everlasting hardness of heart ; and whatsoever enmity against God and godliness was found in the heart in this world, is increased in the world to come, when all manner of softening means and mercies are ever at an end. This leads me to the next thought.

4. How wretched soever our state is at death, the day of hope is ended, and it returns no more. Be our circumstances never so bad, yet we are not completely wretched while the time of hope remains. We are all by nature miserable by reason of sin, but it is only despair can perfect our misery. Therefore fallen angels are sealed up under misery because there is no door of hope opened

life. He now invites you to return to God, with an acknowledgement and renunciation of every sin, and he offers to take you by the hand, and introduce you into his Father's presence with comfort: this is a day of hope for the vilest and most hateful criminals ; but if you continue to refuse, he will shortly swear in his wrath, you shall never enter into his kingdom, you shall never taste of the provisions of his grace, you shall never be partakers of the blessings purchased with his blood. Heb. iii. 11, 18. " I swear in my wrath," saith the Lord, " they shall not enter into my rest."

Oh the dreadful state of sinful creatures, who continue in such obstinacy, who waste away the means of grace and the seasons of hope, week after week, and month after month, till the day of grace and hope is for ever at an end with them! Hopeless creatures! Under the power and the plague of sin, under the wrath and curse of a God, under the eternal displeasure of Jesus, who was once

of the saints by Jesus the great Mediator, while he afforded life and time?

Death is daily and hourly hastening upon us : Death is the king of terrors, and will fulfil all his name to every soul that is unprepared. It is a piece of wisdom then for every one of us, since we must die, to search and feel whether death has lost its sting or no : whether it be taken away by the blood of Christ. Is this blood sprinkled on my conscience, by the humble exercise of faith on a dying Saviour? Are the terrors of death removed, and am I prepared to meet it by the sanctifying influences of the blessed Spirit? Have I such an interest in the covenant of grace as takes away the sting of death, as turns the curse into a blessing, and changes the dark scenes of death into the commencement of a new and everlasting life? This is that preparation for dying for which our time of life was given us, and happy are those who are taught of God to make this use of it.

heirs of the heavenly inheritance through Jesus Christ : we may be renewed into the temper and Spirit of heaven ; and this life is the only season that is given us for this important change : shall we let our days and years pass away one after another in long succession, and continue the children of wrath still? Are we contented to go on this year as the last without a title to heaven, without a divine temper, and without any preparation for the business or the blessedness of that happy world ?

6. When this life comes to an end, the time of all our earthly comforts and amusements shall be no more. We shall have none of these sensible things around us to employ or entertain our eyes or our ears, to gratify our appetites, to sooth our passions, or to support our spirits in distress. All the infinite variety of cares, labours and joys, which surround us here, shall be no more : life with all the busy scenes and the pleasing satisfactions of it dissolve and perish together : have a care then that you do

my friends, that your souls do not live too much on any of the satisfactions of this life, that your affections be not set upon them in too high a degree, that you make them not your idols and your chief good, lest you be left helpless and miserable under everlasting disappointment, for they cannot follow you into the world of souls; they are the things of time, and they have no place in eternity. Read what caution the apostle Paul gives us in our converse with the dearest comforts of life; 1 Cor. vii. 29. The time is short; and let those who have the largest affluence of temporal blessings, who have the nearest and kindest relatives, and the most endeared friendships be mortified to them, and be in some sense "as though they had them not," for ye cannot possess them long. St. Peter joins in the same sort of advice, 1 Pet. iv. 7. "The end of all things is at hand, therefore be ye sober," be ye moderate in every enjoyment on earth, and prepare to part with them all

thirty or forty years there, or perhaps seventy or eighty, and I gave you this time with a thousand opportunities and means of grace and salvation; what have you done with them all? How many sabbaths did I afford you? How many sermons have ye heard? How many seasons did I give you for prayer, and retirement, and converse with God and your own souls? Did you improve time well? Did you pray? Did you converse with your souls and with God? Or did you suffer time to slide away in a thousand impertinences, and neglect the one thing necessary?’

2. A fruitless and bitter mourning for the waste and abuse of time will be another consequence of your folly. Whatsoever satisfaction you may take now in passing time away merrily and without thinking, it must not pass away so for ever. If the approaches of death do not awaken you, yet judgment will do it. Your consciences will be worried with terrible reflections on your foolish conduct.

put within their reach for ever. The gospel hath no calls, no invitations, no encouragements, no promises for the dead, who have lost and wasted their time, and are perished without hope. The region of sorrows, whither the judge shall drive in penitent sinners, is a dark and desolate place, where light and hope can never come; but fruitless repentance with horrors and agonies of soul, and doleful despair, reign through that world without one gleam of light or hope, or one moment of intermission. Then will despairing sinners gnaw their tongues for anguish of heart, and curse themselves with long execrations, and curse their fellow-sinners who assisted them to waste their time, and to ruin their souls.

4. The last terror I shall mention which will attend Sinners at the end of time is, an eternal suffering of all the painful and dismal consequences of lost and wasted time. Not

I scorned the tender admonitions of a mother, and wasted that time in sinning and sensuality which should have been spent in prayer and devotion! And God turns a deaf ear to my cries now, and is regardless of all my groanings. This sort of anguish of spirit with loud and cutting complaints would destroy life itself, and these inward terrors would sting their souls to death if there could be any such thing as dying there. Such sighs and sobs and bitter agonies would break their hearts and dissolve their being, if the heart could break, or the being could be dissolved: but immortality is their dreadful portion, immortality of sorrows to punish their wicked and wilful abuse of time and that waste of the means of grace they were guilty of in their mortal state.

I proceed in the last place to consider what reflections may be made on this discourse, or what are some of the profitable lessons to be learnt

THE END OF TIME.

for the end of time, ready to hear this awful sentence confirmed with the oath of the glorious angel, that "Time shall be no longer." The terrors or the comforts of a dying bed depend upon it: the solemn and decisive voice of judgment depends upon it: the joys and sorrows of a long eternity depend upon it: go now, careless sinners, and in the view of such things as these, go and trifle away time as you have done before; time, that invaluable treasure: go and venture the loss of your souls, and the hopes of heaven and your eternal happiness, in wasting away the remnant hours or moments of life: but remember the awful voice of the angel is hastening toward you, and the sound is just breaking in upon you, that "Time shall be no longer."

Refl. 2. A due sense of time hastening to its period will furnish us with perpetual new occasions of holy meditation.

Do I observe the declining day and the setting sun sinking into darkness

with a silent pace ; but they will arrive with certainty at the last limit, how heedless soever I am of their motion, and how thoughtless soever I may be of the improvement of time, or of the end of it.

Does a new year commence, and the first morning of it dawn upon me ? Let me remember that the last year was finished, and gone over my head, in order to make way for the entrance of the present : I have one year the less to travel through this world, and to fulfil the various services of a travelling state : may my diligence in duty be double since the number of my appointed years is diminished.

Do I find a new birth-day in my survey of the calendar, the day wherein I entered upon the stage of mortality, and was born into this world of sins, frailties and sorrows, in order to my probation for a better state ? Blessed

“time shall be no longer,” has concluded their hopes, or has finished their fears, and according to the rules of righteous judgment, has decided their misery or happiness for a long immortality. Take this warning, O my soul, and think of thy own removal.

Are we standing in the church-yard, paying the last honours to the relics of our friends? what a number of hillocks of death appear all around us! what are the tomb-stones but memorials of the inhabitants of that town, to inform us of the period of all their lives, and to point out the day when it was said to each of them, “your time shall be no longer.” O may I readily learn this important lesson, that my turn is hastening too; such a little hillock shall shortly arise for me on some unknown spot of ground; it shall cover this flesh and these bones of mine in darkness, and shall hide them from the light of the sun, and from the sight of man, till

of my heart, and all the labours of my tongue and pen !

Think, O my soul, that while friends or strangers are engaged on that spot, and reading the day of thy departure hence, thou wilt be fixed under a decisive and unchangeable sentence, rejoicing in the rewards of time well-improved, or suffering the long sorrows which shall attend the abuse of it, in an unknown world of happiness or misery.

Refl. 3. We may learn from this discourse the stupid folly and madness of those who are terribly afraid of the end of time whensoever they think of it, and yet they know not what to do with their time as 't runs off daily and hourly. They find their souls unready for death, and yet they live from year to year without any further preparation for dying : they waste away

what use to make of it; they are quite at a loss how to get rid of this tedious thing called time, which lies daily as a burthen on their hands. Indeed, if their head ach, or their face grow pale, and a physician feel their pulse or look wishfully on their countenance; and especially if he should shake his head, or tell them his fears, that they will not hold out long, what surprize of soul, what agonies and terrors seize them on a sudden, for fear of the end of time! for they are conscious how unfit they are for eternity: yet when the pain vanishes, and they feel health again, they are as much at a loss as ever, what to do with the remnant of life.

O the painful and unhappy ignorance of the sons and daughters of men, that are sent hither on a trial for eternity, and yet know not how to pass away time! they know not how to wear

they will one day learn by bitter experience what substantial, important, and eternal blessings they have lost by their criminal and shameful waste of time. The apostle Peter assures them, 2 Pet. ii. 3. Though they slumber and sleep in a lethargy of sin, so that you cannot awaken them, yet "their judgment lingereth not, and their damnation slumbereth not." The awful moment is hasting upon them which shall teach them terribly the true value of time; then they would give all the golden pleasures, and the riches and the grandeur of this world, to purchase one short day more or one hour of time, wherein they might repent and return to God, and get within the reach of hope and salvation: but time and salvation and hope are all vanished and fled and gone out of their reach for ever.

· Refl. 4. Learn from such meditations as these, the rich mercy of God and

waited on you with fresh admonitions, and with special providences, with mercies and judgments, with promises and invitations of grace, with threatenings and words of terror, and with the whispers and advices of his own Spirit, since you began to see your danger? And after all have you yet sincerely repented of sin? have you yet received the offered grace? have you given up yourselves to the Lord and laid hold of his salvation? 2 Cor. vi. 2. "This is the accepted time, this is the day of salvation; to-day if you will hear his voice harden not your hearts." Heb. iii. 7, 8. &c. It is never said through all the Bible, that "to morrow is the day of grace, or to-morrow is the time of acceptance;" it is the present hour only that is offered. Every day and every hour is a mercy of unknown importance to sinful men: It is a mercy, O sinners, that you awaked not this morning in hell, and that you were not fixed without remedy beyond the reach of hope and mercy.

too much time without

all? How many are there, that when they have morning hours on their hands, can pass them off on their beds, and lose and forget time in "a little more sleep, and a little more slumber;" a few impertinences with breakfast and dressing, wear out the morning without God. And how many afternoon and evening hours are worn away in such sauntering idleness as I have described, that when the night comes they cannot review one half hour's useful work, from the dawn of the morning to the hour of rest. Time is gone and vanished, and as they knew not what to do with it while

THE END OF TIME.

made to no good purpose, or been prolonged beyond all necessity or improvement? when your conversation runs low even to the dregs, and both you and your friends have been at a loss what to say next, and knew not how to fill up the time, yet the visit must go on and time must be wasted. Sometimes the wind and the weather, and twenty insignificancies, or (what is much worse) scandal of persons or families have come in to your relief, that there might not be too long a silence; but not one word of God or goodness could find room to enter in and relieve the dull hour. Is none of this time ever to be accounted for? and will it sound well in the ears of the great Judge, We ran to these sorry topics, these slanderous and backbiting stories, because we could not tell what to talk of, and we knew not how

business at all, because another proper season for it hath never offered ; time hath been no more. Felix put off his discourse with Paul about the faith of Christ and righteousness and judgment to come, "to a more convenient time," which probably never came. Acts xxiv. 25. And the word of God teaches us, that if we neglect our salvation in the present day of grace, the angel in my text is ready to swear, that time shall be no longer.

Here permit me to put in a short word to those who have lost much time already.

Father, that when days and months are no more, you may enter into the region of everlasting light and peace.

But I proceed to the last general remark. Learn the unspeakable happiness of those who have improved time well, and who wait for the end of time with Christian hope. They are not afraid, or at least they need not be afraid of the sentence nor the oath of this mighty angel, when he lifts up his hand to heaven and swears with a loud voice, there shall be time no more.

O blessed creatures, who have so happily improved the time of life and day of grace,

him without veils and shadows, without the reflecting glass of his word and ordinances, which at best give us but a faint glimpse of him, either in his nature or wisdom, his power or goodness. You shall see him in himself and in his Son Jesus, the brightest and fairest image of the Father, and "shall know him as you are known," 1 Cor. xiii. 10, 12.

There is no more time for temptation and danger : when once you are got beyond the limits of this visible world, and all the enticing objects of flesh and sense, there shall be no more hazard of your salvation, no more doubting and distressing fears about your interest in your Father

the "society of sinful creatures:" your spirits within you shall be no more ruffled and disquieted with the teizing conversation of the wicked, nor shall you be interrupted in your holy and heavenly exercises by any of the enemies of God and his grace.

The time of your "painful labours and sufferings is no more," Rev. xiv. 13. "Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord, for they rest from all their labours" that carry toil or fatigue with them: there shall be no more complaints nor groans, no sorrow or crying: the springs of grief are for ever dried up, neither shall there be any more pain in the flesh or

DISCOURSE II

THE WATCHFUL CHRISTIAN DYING IN PEACE.

A FUNERAL SERMON.

On the death of Mrs. Sarah Abney

IT is an awful providence which hath lately removed from among us a young person well known to most of you, whose agreeable temper and conduct had gained the esteem of all her acquaintance, whose constitution of body, together with the furniture of her mind and circumstances in the

disciples, that when he was departed from this world they should ever be upon their guard, and always in a readiness to receive him at his return ; because he would come on a sudden, and in such an hour as they thought not, to demand an account of their behaviour, and to distribute his recompences according to their works. There are two of these parables in this chapter ; but to enter into a detail of all the particular metaphors which relate to this one whence I have borrowed my text, would be too tedious here, and would spend too much of the present hour. Without any longer preface, therefore, I shall apply myself to improve the words to our spiritual profit in the following method.

crime of rejecting and crucifying the son of God. But these words in their supreme and most important sense always point to the glorious appearance of Christ at the last day, when he shall come to shut up all the scenes of this frail life, to put an end to the present world, to finish all the works of this mortal state, and to decide and determine the eternal states of all mankind by the general judgment.

Yet Christ comes to each of us in "the hour of death also, for he hath the keys of death and of hell," or of the invisible world, Rev. i. 18. It is he who appoints the very moment when the soul

fit for business, and our lamps burning to attend him at the door, and that we be ready to receive him, as soon as he knocks.

Were the appointed hour of judgment or of death made known to us for months or years before hand. we should be ready to think constant watchfulness a very needless thing. Mankind would persuade themselves to indulge their foolish and sinful slumbers, and only take care to rub their eyes a little and bestir themselves an

Spiritual death as well as natural is sometimes called a sleep. Such is the case of a soul "dead in trespasses and sins," Eph. v. 14. Compared with ii. 1. "Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light."

Watchfulness therefore implies life, a principle of spiritual life in the soul : surely those who are dead in sins are not prepared to receive their Lord : he is a perfect stranger to them, they know him not, they love him not, they obey him not; and a terrible stranger he will be if he comes upon them before

upon him : he has grown too careless and unconcerned about his most important and eternal affairs ; and in this temper he hardly knows what his state is toward God, nor keeps up a lively sense or notice of divine and eternal things upon his spirit.

Watchfulness in opposition to this sleep, implies a holy solicitude and diligence to know our own spiritual state ; a consciousness of what we are ;

its allurements and attractions, lest he be defiled thereby and unfit to meet his returning Lord : he is daily loosening his heart from all sensual attachments, and weaning himself from the world and creatures, because he knows he must quickly take his long farewell, and part with them all at the call and appointment of his great master. He is like a centinel upon his watch-tower, ever awake because dangers stand thick around him.

4. There

from the sleep of death, and made spiritually alive; he hath the work of vital religion begun in his heart.

He is awake from the sleep of thoughtlessness and indolence, he is solicitous to know his own state, and hath good hope through grace, he lives in the view of heavenly things, and keeps his eye open to future and eternal glories.

and stars, and to all things which their light can shew him, for he is going to a world where the Sun of righteousness ever shines in unclouded glory, and discovers such sights as are infinitely superior to all that the eyes of flesh can behold : he can part with friends and kindred with a composed spirit, for he is going to meet better friends and diviner kindred, as we shall shew immediately : he can leave his dying flesh behind him and commit it to the dust in joyful hope of the great

with utmost care, and guard against every displeasing thought, and every fretful and vexing passion, lest it should be fixed upon us till we die?

Now this is the case at death : the almighty voice of God then pronounces, “ he that is unclean and unholy, must for ever be unholy and unclean ; but he that is righteous let him be righteous

It is certain, that when the soul departs from the body "it returns to God who gave it." Eccles. xii. 7. And probably to God as a Judge too, Heb. ix. 27. "After death judgment." There is some sort of determination of the state of each single person at death before the great and general judgment-day, because that day is appointed rather for the public vindication of the equity of God in his distribution of rewards and punishments, and is particularly put into the hands of our Lord Jesus:

then declares what was his support and hope in his dying hour : as for me, saith he, I have other views, I am not afraid, O my God, to appear before thee in the other world, for I shall see thy face, not as a criminal, but as a person approved and accepted, and righteous in thy sight : I shall awake from this world of dreams and shadows into thy complete image and perfect holiness ; or I shall awake from the dust of death and shall be fully satisfied, and rejoice

whom he hath touched, and tasted in the appointed emblems of his supper on earth, in whom he hath believed through the word of grace, and whom he hath loved before he saw him, shall now receive him into his presence, and the disciple shall rejoice for ever to meet his Lord with joy unspeakable and full of glory.

5. Consideration.

we are united to the same head, and made parts of the same household, though we are not yet brought home : but at death we are actually present with them, and dwell and converse among them with holy familiarity, as citizens of the same heavenly Jerusalem, as parts of the same sacred family and at home, as children of the same God and in their Father's house. The watchful Christian is at once carried into the midst of the blessed world by ministering angels, the world where Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob dwell, and made speedy partaker of their blessedness, Luke

satisfied that he is prepared for that happy world by God himself; 2 Cor. v. 5. "He that hath wrought us for the self-same thing is God:" he is well pleased to have his faith changed into sight, and his hope into fruition: he hath been long pained and burthened in this sinful world with the vain trifles, the poor low cares and amusements of it; the sins, and sorrows, and temptations that

of dying ; we can make use of none of the means of grace, nor do any thing more to secure an interest in the love of God, the salvation of Christ, and the blessings of heaven.

This is a very dismal thought indeed.

friend; though her distemper soon discomposed her reasoning powers, and gave her very little opportunity to make a present preparation for dying. But she had heard the voice of Christ in his gospel betimes, and awoke to righteousness at his call, that she might be always ready for his summons in death. Religion was her early care, a fear to offend God possessed and governed her thoughts

in the walls of a mother's house, but indulged a just curiosity to learn some of the forms of the world, the magnificence of courts, and the grandeurs of life, yet she knew how far to appear among them, and when to retire. Nor did she forbid herself all the polite diversions of youth agreeable to her rank ; nor did reason or religion, or her superior relatives forbid her: yet

she could address herself to God, and say, how often she had given herself to him ; she hoped she had done it sincerely, and found acceptance with him, and trusted that she was not deceived. The gleams of reason that broke in between the clouds, gave her light enough to discern her own evidences of piety, and refresh her hope. Then she repeated some of the last verses of

O blessed situation of soul when we stand prepared for death, though it come with the formidable retinue of a disordered brain and clouded reason ! it would be too long at present to represent to you the sad consequences of being found asleep when Christ comes to call us away from this world, I shall therefore only make these three reflections.

divine, can effectually quicken a dead soul and awaken it into a divine life. It is the work of "God to quicken the dead," Rom. iv. 17. Eph. ii. 5. It is the Son of God who is the "light and life

lity all around us ; the seeds of disease and dissolution are working within us from our very birth and cradle ever since sin entered into our natures ; and we should ever be in a readiness to remove hence since we are never secure

Refl. 2. If such blessedness as I have described belong to every watchful Christian at the hour of death, then it may not be improper here to take notice of some "peculiar advantages which attend those who shake off the deadly

has taught us to practise an early weaning from all temporal comforts, and a little loosened our hearts from them by the faith of things eternal.

balm to heal the wound and give present ease to the heart-ach

We are ready to run over their virtues, and spread

dangers of youth, and proved a successful defence against some of the allurements and temptations of the gayer years of life: and then we mourn afresh that a person so well formed

her life and watchful readiness to follow her in death are the best honours we can pay her memory, and the wisest improvement of the present providence. May the spirit of grace teach us these lessons and make us learn them with power, that when our Lord Jesus shall come to call us hence by death, or shall

DISCOURSE III.

.....
SURPRISE IN DEATH.
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MARK xiii. 36.

the coming of Christ mentioned therein, refer to the great day of judgment, when he shall return from heaven, shall raise the dead, and call mankind to appear

natural death are great and formidable, though they are not equally dangerous : let us consider each of them in succession, in order to rouse dead sinners from

try to form some faint hope of mercy, how are their spirits perplexed with prevailing and distracting fears, with

irregular efforts of a drowning creature, constrained to let go

that makes it

ened to a sight of God and his justice and his grace, to a sight of heaven

love him, he has no meltings of true penit

express it) which have been darkened and stupified and benumbed in

Such un

b

while they have

less fancy !

